Caroline Spelman visits Met Office following flooding in South West

09 July - Caroline Spelman, Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs visited the Met Office.

Following the heavy rain and flooding across the UK in recent days Caroline Spelman, Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs visited the Met Office on Sunday to see how accurate forecasts, timely warnings and effective action can help to reduce the impacts of heavy rain and flooding.

While visiting the Met Office Headquarters and Operations Centre in Exeter, Caroline Spelman said: "Staff at the Met Office and the Environment Agency have provided a crucial service by warning that terrible weather was on the way. The work of the Flood Forecasting Centre meant that many people were able to take action to prepare for the floods, protecting their homes and businesses.

"I'd like to thank all of the Met Office and Environment Agency staff for their role in helping to limit the damage the floods caused."

Rob Varley, Director of Operations at the Met Office said: "The Met Office is committed to helping protect the nation from the impacts of severe weather with timely and accurate weather forecasts."

"Our forecasters and team of Met Office advisers work to help emergency responders assess the risk of severe weather and put preparations in place to minimise its impacts."

The Met Office and Environment Agency work in partnership through the Flood Forecasting Centre , located at the Met Office's Headquarters and Operations Centre in Exeter.

The Flood Forecasting Centre provides forecasts for river, coastal flooding and surface water flooding and aims to provide earlier warnings of floods to local authorities and the emergency services. These warnings give them more time to prepare for floods and reduce the risk of loss of life and damage to property whilst complementing public flood warnings from the Environment Agency and weather warnings from the Met Office.

Richard Cresswell, Director South West for the Environment Agency said: "The Flood Forecasting Centre is focal point for the huge amount of work that happens between the Met Office and Environment Agency to give the very best advice on flood risk."

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